

**ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS USING POINT TO POINT
PROTOCOLS SUCH THAT DUPLICATE NEGOTIATIONS ARE AVOIDED****ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A network element (204) acting as an intermediary between two peers (202, 206) monitors for control messages exchanged between the two peers when establishing a point to point protocol session. Relevant parameters within such control messages are stored (612) for later use. When retransmitted control messages are detected (610), the network element processes the retransmitted control message based on the stored parameters (618) such that additional negotiation loops are avoided. In this manner, the effects of non-simultaneous link establishment and differing timeout timers are mitigated by the network element.